

## Patent claims

1.-6. (cancelled)

7. (new) A method for defining structures of object and/or data models, wherein schemata describe the structures, each schema having a namespace, type names, and element names, the method comprising:

characterizing a schema by assigning a version of the schema to a first attribute of the schema, wherein

the namespace, type names, and element names of the schema are maintained independently of the version, wherein

types and elements are expanded maintaining the respective type names or element names, and wherein

unexpanded types and elements are accepted unchanged into schemata characterized by a newer version from types and elements used in schemata characterized by an older version.

8. (new) The method according to Claim 7, wherein a calendar date can be assigned via a second attribute to a version of the schema.

9. (new) The method according to Claim 7, wherein the schemata are described by an extensible markup language.

10. (new) The method according to Claim 8, wherein the schemata are described by an extensible markup language.

11. (new) A system for definition of structures of object models and/or data models having at least one schema for description of the structures, wherein

a first attribute of a schema is provided for identification of a version of a relevant schema, wherein

a namespace used in the schema and type names and element

names used in the schema are preserved regardless of the version, the system comprising:

a mechanism for expansion of the types and elements while preserving the type names respectively the element names and for unchanged acceptance of unexpanded types or elements used in schemas having an older version into schemas having a newer version.

12. (new) The system in accordance with Claim 11, wherein a calendar date is assigned via a second attribute to a version of a schema.

13. (new) The system in accordance with Claim 11, wherein the schemata are described by an extensible markup language.

14. (new) The system in accordance with Claim 12, wherein the schemata are described by an extensible markup language.